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THE NURSING TEAM AND THE CHALLENGES OF CARING FOR THE TRANSGENDER POPULATION IN HEALTH SERVICES

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Débora Eliana Teichmann
Degree in Nursing and Obstetrics from the Centro Universitário Franciscano; Master's Degree in Health Sciences from Universidade Comunitária da Região de Chapecó-Unochapeco; Specialization in Health Services Administration from the Centro Universitário Franciscano; and Specialization in Industrial and Food Microbiology from UNOESC (Universidade do Oeste de Santa Catarina); She is currently coordinator of the Nursing course at UCEFF in Itapiranga, and lecturer on the Physiotherapy, Nutrition, Biomedicine and Aesthetics and Cosmetology hybrid courses at UCEFF -Itapiranga/SC; She is a member of the Commission to Combat COVID-19 and a representative member of the Itapiranga Municipal Health Council; He has experience in distance education management, hybrid teaching and teaching content in distance education
http://lattes.cnpq.br/1369780660416980

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Ezequias Paes Lopes
Nurse with a degree in Nursing; Faculdade Pan-Amazônica, FAPAN, Brasil; Master's degree in Gerontology in progress; Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, UFSM, Brasil; Ongoing specialization in WORK NURSING (Hours: 660h); Faculdade FAMART, Brasil; Ongoing specialization in Intensive Care and Emergency Nursing-Adult (Hours: 360h); Universidade La Salle- Canoas, UNILASALLE; I am currently working as a nurse in clinical admissions, and I have already worked as an emergency room nurse at the Hospital Regional de São Jerônimo; Charqueadas-RS
http://lattes.cnpq.br/5050728337258979

Regina Martins Reggiori
Graduated in Nursing from the Universidade Regional do Noroeste do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul (2006); Specialist in Humanization of SUS Management and Care from the Universidade Federal do estado do Rio Grande do Sul (2009); Master's student in Education (completion December 2021 - awaiting certification) at the Universidade Regional Integrada do Alto Uruguai - URI / FW; She has extensive experience in generalist nursing services, care management and nursing care management; She is currently nurse manager of the nursing service at the Associação Hospitalar Beneficente Santo Antônio de Tenente Portela – RS; Professor of Nursing at the Centro Universitário FAI - UCEFF Itapiranga; Ijuí-RS
http://lattes.cnpq.br/9265455486823410

Vanusa Eduarda Tech
She has a degree in Nursing from the Universidade de Santa Cruz do Sul, UNISC; University Extension in I Online Course on Priority Diseases for the Unified Health System; University Extension in Nursing Assistance in monitoring CVP and IAP; University Extension in Arterial Blood Gasometry in Care Practice; University course in Blood count, anemia and lymphadenopathy; University course in PICC Insertion, Maintenance and Removal; She is currently a nurse at the Hospital Regional de São Jerônimo; She has experience in clinical, surgical, pediatric and ICU nursing
http://lattes.cnpq.br/4872495620515060

Gabriel da Silva Morcelli
Ongoing degree in Nursing from the Centro Universitário FAI - UCEFF Itapiranga
http://lattes.cnpq.br/8052328190099161

Abstract: OBJECTIVE: To describe the stages and experience of constructing an instrument to guide the health team on good practices in humanized care for the transsexual population in health services. **METHODOLOGY:** This is a descriptive study, based on the experience of the nursing team working in the care area. **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:** The experience provided evidence of the importance of Health Education actions with the aim of promoting health with excellence from the perspective of humanized care for the transgender population. It is believed that these actions should be carried out in the most diverse settings, especially in Primary Health Care, which is responsible for the entire period prior to the user's arrival at the hospital. **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS:** Through the actions and relationships developed with the population they serve, nurses play an essential role in developing strategies to meet the demands of the "trans" public, and discriminatory and/or repulsive acts towards these people are unacceptable. In order to avoid this, scientifically-based knowledge of how to approach and assist the "trans" population is of paramount importance, regardless of whether this knowledge is acquired during undergraduate studies and/or in preparatory and further training courses.
Keywords: Health Promotion. Nursing Team. Transgender people. Health services.

INTRODUCTION

"Brazil is an extremely unsafe country for this population, as we can see from the trend in the number of violent deaths of LGBTI+ people over the last two decades" (ASSOCIAÇÃO NACIONAL DE TRAVESTIS E TRANSEXUAIS).

"Between 2000 and 2021, 5,362 people died as a result of prejudice and intolerance on the part of the population and due to the neglect of the authorities responsible for implementing public policies capable of curbing cases of violence." In 2021, "we recorded a total of 316 deaths of LGBTI people" (ASSOCIAÇÃO NACIONAL DE TRAVESTIS E TRANSEXUAIS).

"The year 2021 saw a 22% increase in murders of LGBTI+ human rights defenders in Brazil. Nine murders were recorded, two more than in 2020." Of this group, "eight were black, six gay and four trans. Three activists worked in capital cities, while six worked in the interior of their states." Two people "were activists in the struggle for land, which is noteworthy given the growing role of LGBTI+ people in defense of land reform and who have been organizing politically in the last period, especially since 2015" (ASSOCIAÇÃO NACIONAL DE TRAVESTIS E TRANSEXUAIS).

Nursing, as a science of caring for human beings, regulated by Law No. 7,498 of June 25, 1986, whose professional is the nurse who is in charge of Primary Health Care, which is the gateway to all levels of the Health Care Network (RAS), has a fundamental role in assisting the "trans" population, free of judgments and discrimination, where it must have a holistic and humanized vision for those who need its care.

Borges and Passos (2022), highlight the important role of nurses in this care, where it is necessary to have the knowledge, improvement and aptitude to deal inclusively with the "trans" population, understanding all the care available in the SUS, whether it is the transsexualizing process, hormone therapy or transgenitalization. Since not all transgender people wish to undergo a transsexualization process, they want and have the right to be cared for without any kind of intolerance.

Based on the above, this study is justified by the fact that there is a lack of interventions provided by the health team in relation to care for the transgender population in the health service.

The aim of this study was to describe the stages and experience of building a tool to guide healthcare staff on good practices in humanized care for the transgender population in healthcare services. The activity was carried out in the clinical and emergency admissions units of a medium-sized hospital in the Carboniferous Region of Rio Grande do Sul in 2023, and the theme was chosen by the authors based on their experience and concern about the humanization of care for the transgender population.

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive study, of the experience report type, based on the experience of the nursing team working in the care area. The choice to report the experience came about because it makes it possible to describe the experience based on interpretation, objectivity and the foundation of theoretical support. The experience took place during daily activities in 2023.

The study was carried out in a public hospital located in the coal region in the state of Rio Grande do Sul. This health establishment is a reference in medium-complexity care for the entire region. The study's target audience was the nursing staff working in the morning, afternoon and evening at the hospital.

Based on the precepts of Charles Maguerez, the problematization methodology was used, consisting of five stages (MITRE et. al., 2008). The first stage involved observing reality and defining the problem. We observed the complexity of the care provided to transgender people seeking assistance at the service, where each user is of varying ages, with some having simple complaints and others not.

In the second stage, a survey of the key points was carried out, in which a reflection began on the practices adopted by the nursing team to assist the transsexual population, as well as the importance of building an instrument to guide the nursing team on good practices in the light of the National Comprehensive Health Policy for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transvestites and Transsexuals and the National Humanization Policy. This stage assessed: the conduct of the nursing team, users' knowledge of the National Humanization Policy and the National Comprehensive Health Policy for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transvestites and Transsexuals; whether each user's social name was respected, whether they had received information about waiting times for care, the importance of a humanized welcome during nursing care and whether they knew about the National Comprehensive Health Policy for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transvestites and Transsexuals.

In the theorization that makes up the third stage, it was time to seek more elaborate answers to the problems encountered, based on information grounded in scientific studies. Unfortunately, assistance to the trans population does not take place in an equitable manner, since there are still flaws from the reception to the assistance itself and this is due to several factors such as: restricted knowledge, insecurity in approaches, flawed guidelines and even low demand for health services (SILVA et al 2023).

"The transsexual population experiences situations of embarrassment in the health services, which makes them avoid using these services and feel afraid when they need to seek some kind of care in these spaces, in the face of embarrassment they create strategies to manage to remain in the services, in this perspective it is inferred that the transsexual population is subjected to neglect, institutional prejudice, and do not have their health needs met, encountering numerous barriers in accessing the formal

health care network, making them resort to other alternatives to build this care, which can sometimes be unsafe for health ((PAIVA, FARAH E DUARTE, 2023)).

Silva (2023) and collaborators pointed to the need for internships and classes on the subject at undergraduate level and continuing training based on promoting humanization for health professionals as solutions. Everyone should treat trans people's social names and gender identities with dignity and respect.

In the fourth stage, hypotheses for solutions were raised using the researched content. The hypothesis found as a solution was to hold meetings to reflect on the construction of an instrument to guide the nursing team on good practices in caring for the transgender population, as well as an educational activity with the nursing team, transgender people and those accompanying them, to raise awareness about good practices in the face of the importance of health promotion.

The fifth and final stage of Charles Maguerez's Arc is to intervene in reality in order to solve the problem identified. In this way, an educational folder was produced, including the National Policy for the Integral Health of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transvestites and Transsexuals as a watershed for public health policies in Brazil, which is a historic milestone in recognizing the demands of this population in a condition of vulnerability, that the LGBT Policy is made up of a set of guidelines whose operationalization requires plans containing health strategies and targets and its implementation requires challenges and commitments from government bodies, the guarantee of health care is the prerogative of every Brazilian citizen, respecting their specificities of gender, race/ethnicity, generation, orientation and affective and sexual practices, finally that respect without prejudice and without discrimination is valued in the Policy as a foundation for humanization in the promotion, protection, attention and care of health, however, for this to be effective, the LGBT Policy articulates a set of actions and programs, which constitute concrete measures to be implemented, in all spheres of SUS management. When the folder was handed out individually to each person, companion and member of the nursing team, a brief conversation was held on the subject in a short space of time so as not to interfere with the team's activities.

After addressing the topic and handing out the brochure individually to each member of the nursing team, the participant had the opportunity to express their opinion on the subject, clarify doubts and suggest possible changes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The experience provided evidence of the importance of Health Education actions with the aim of promoting health with excellence from the perspective of humanized care for the transgender population. It is believed that these actions should be carried out in the most diverse settings, especially in Primary Health Care, which is responsible for the entire period before the user arrives at the hospital.

According to Vilanova et al. (2014), health promotion is "understood as a combination of educational and environmental support that aims to achieve actions and living conditions conducive to health and that involve the formation of attitudes and values that lead individuals to autonomous behavior, benefiting their health and that of those around them".

By seeking out different, scientifically proven and up-to-date knowledge, activities were developed for the maternal-child nursing team, pregnant women and those

accompanying them. It is worth emphasizing that when health professionals seek to improve themselves, they are putting into practice the improvement of their technical, scientific, ethical and cultural knowledge, for the benefit of the person, family and community and for the development of the profession (RIBEIRO et al. 2016).

Considering the work process, maternal and child health routines and the short time available to the professionals, the action took place on alternate days from 10 to 11 in the morning, 16 and 17 in the afternoon and 20 and 21 in the evening. Composed of 5 nurses, 15 nursing technicians, an average of 8 people who identified as transgender and their respective companions.

The action was primarily aimed at the nursing team, as it is based on the nursing team's experience of care. However, users and carers showed a lot of interest in the subject and became very involved in the action.

The activity was carried out inside the hospital itself, since due to the high flow of patients, it would not be feasible for the professionals to leave their posts, or to move the users and their companions to another location. The health education took place in a simple way: the participants were divided into two groups (transgender people with their companions and nursing professionals). After the division, each member of the group (the nursing professionals) approached a transgender person and their companion and asked for permission to talk about the topic and hand out the educational folder.

The brochure highlighted the National Policy for the Integral Health of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transvestites and Transsexuals as a watershed for public health policies in Brazil, that it is a historic milestone in recognizing the demands of this population in a condition of vulnerability, that the LGBT Policy is made up of a set of guidelines whose operationalization requires plans containing health strategies and targets and its implementation requires challenges and commitments from government bodies, the guarantee of health care is the prerogative of every Brazilian citizen, respecting their specificities of gender, race/ethnicity, generation, orientation and affective and sexual practices, finally that respect without prejudice and without discrimination is valued in the Policy as a foundation for humanization in the promotion, protection, attention and care of health, however, for this to be effective, the LGBT Policy articulates a set of actions and programs, which constitute concrete measures to be implemented, in all spheres of SUS management. After handing it out and addressing the topic, a moment was set aside for users and companions to ask questions and for the professionals to have the opportunity to highlight the challenges they face in terms of humanizing care.

The feedback provided by the professionals who took part in the activities together with the transgender people and their companions was very positive, with acceptance and appreciation of the knowledge built, with deep reflections identified through the speeches. Thus, it was found that a Health Education activity, based on the real needs of the target audience, can bring about significant changes through critical reflection, and thus promote better health care for users who are often fragile due to the health-disease process. It should be emphasized that the orientation and planning of the activity based on a real problem identified in the practical experience were fundamental in supporting the action.

However, every nursing professional working in the care area should seek new knowledge by attending scientific events, among other methods of updating and training, and hospital managers should review continuing education within each

institution. This will enable professionals to carry out their daily activities with autonomy, safety and excellence.

Therefore, taking into account that health is everyone's right, it is of the utmost importance to reflect on the subject studied, as well as to improve care and the effective implementation of the policy, thus bringing this population into the health service.

In light of this study, there is still a need to expand knowledge about the particularities of the trans population, so that equitable care can be provided, thus minimizing inequalities, and for this, nurses play a fundamental role, since they are the professionals at the forefront of Primary Health Care.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the light of health education in relation to promotion and prevention, this study highlights the importance of discussing the importance of the National Policy for the Integral Health of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transvestites and Transsexuals in PHC and when this was considered a watershed moment for public health policies in Brazil, It is a historic milestone that recognizes the demands of a population in a condition of vulnerability, so it is of great value to raise a discussion with the health team and with the transgender person, in order to guarantee access for these users to the health service, promoting health promotion, thus contributing to efficient and effective nursing care, promoting reflection on the issue in question.

The creation of a bond between the professionals who work at the PHC and the transgender person, explaining what will be done in relation to good practices at the time of care, that their gender identity will be respected, their privacy will be preserved and provides better results for the binomial called the health-disease process, dealing with good practices in care, corroborates the creation of a safe and trusting environment for transgender people and their companions.

As for scientific publications on the subject, during the study, works were found in the Brazilian literature on the subject, but they are still incipient. As such, it is believed to be extremely important for health professionals to carry out more studies addressing good practices in the care of the transgender population in health services.

This awakening to research and the exercise of critical thinking are fundamental to building a trained professional. In addition, the practical experience was the greatest incentive to delve deeper into the subject and seek solutions to the problems identified.

Through the actions and relationships developed with the population they serve, nurses play an essential role in devising strategies that meet the demands of the "trans" public, and discriminatory and/or repulsive acts towards these people are unacceptable. In order to avoid this, scientifically-based knowledge of how to approach and assist the "trans" population is of paramount importance, regardless of whether this knowledge is acquired during undergraduate studies and/or in preparatory and further training courses.

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